

Commissioner Williams breaks ground for bridge at River in Johnson County

Folks who live in Offutt get their mail through the River post office, just across the Levisa Fork of the Big Sandy River. There's a walk bridge to the post office, a new one made of a composite material that contains plastic. People call it the "plastic bridge."

There has never been a bridge at River, north of Paintsville in Johnson County, designed for vehicles. But that's about to change. On Tuesday, December 7, 2005, in groundbreaking ceremonies held at the River Volunteer Fire Department, Highway Commissioner Marc Williams announced that a five-span bridge designed by Parsons Brinkerhoff of Lexington will cross over KY 581 at River, the Levisa Fork, a frontage road along Pricetown Road, and the CSX railroad. Bush and Burchett of Allen, Floyd County, was awarded the \$5,640,240 contract.

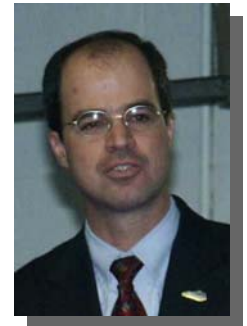
The state-funded Six-Year Plan project allows the contractor 430 working days, about 14.5 months. It is expected that the contractor will start in March or April 2006. "This will not only join two communities," Williams said, "it will make the Offutt area more accessible for future development."

Jones and Collins agreed. "The students from Meade Memorial and their families will especially benefit," said Senator Jones. Collins pointed out that "safety, convenience, and enhancing people's lives with better services — this bridge will accomplish all these things."



From left, Peter van de Venne of Parsons Brinkerhoff, design consultants, Lexington; Senator Ray Jones; Paul Burchett of Bush and Burchett, contractor; District 12 CDE Dal Hall; Rep. Hubert Collins; Amanda Fannin and Justin Daniels, students at Meade Memorial Elementary; and Steve Slade of Parsons-Brinkerhoff.

Joining Williams, Collins, and Jones on stage was Danl Hall, Chief Engineer for Highway District 12. Denvil Mollette, pastor of Ramey Branch Church and a member of District 12's Johnson County Maintenance Crew, gave the invocation. Students from Meade Memorial Elementary led the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of the program.



State Highway Commissioner Marc Williams



Photos by H.B. Elkins